AMENDMENTS TO THE CLAIMS

The following listing of claims will replace all prior versions, and listings, of claims in the application:

1. (Previously Presented) A multimedia player capable of playing back digital contents, comprising:

a control which acquire an instruction related to playback of a content via a user's instruction;

a reader which reads the content from an external storage medium installed in the multimedia player to serve as an area for storing data for the content;

a storage which stores data for a plurality of medium icons representing respective types of external storage mediums that can be installed in the multimedia player;

a display processor which displays an on-screen menu related to playback of the content and processes playback of the content thus read; and

a menu controller which generates image data for the on-screen menu which includes the plurality of medium icons, wherein

the reader reads, from the external storage medium installed in the multimedia player, a menu item image visually representing a summary of the content stored in the external storage medium and including an image generated according to a rule where the size does not overlaps the array of icons included in the on-screen menu or the size matches the size of the entirety on-screen menu, and

the menu controller visually highlights the medium icon which the user selected as a focus of attention, and displays the menu item image read from the external storage medium corresponding to the highlighted medium icon, in the on-screen menu.

2. (Previously Presented) The multimedia player according to claim 1, wherein the reader reads, from a predetermined area in the external storage medium installed in the multimedia player, the image with the size not overlapping the array of icons included in the on-screen menu or with the size matching the size of the entirety on-screen menu, as the menu item image, and

the menu controller generates the image data for the on-screen menu by visually blending the menu item image with an array of medium icons.

3. (Previously Presented) The multimedia player according to claim 1, wherein the storage further stores data for a plurality of function icons representing respective types of playback functions for playing back respective types of contents,

the menu controller generates the image data for the on-screen menu in which the plurality of function icons and the plurality of medium icons are arranged in a two-dimension array,

the image generated according to the rule and read by the reader comprises a foreground image of a size that does not interfere with the array of function icons, and a background image on which is superimposed the array of functional icons, and

the menu controller generates the image data for the on-screen menu by visually blending at least one of the foreground image and the background image with the array of function icons.

4. (Previously Presented) The multimedia player according to claim 1, wherein the reader reads, from the external storage medium installed in the multimedia player, a content icon representing a content stored in the external storage medium, and

the menu controller places the content icon thus read at a position of the medium icon or in the adjoining area thereof.

5. (Original) The multimedia player according to claim 4, wherein the content icon read by the reader from the external storage medium installed in the multimedia player comprises an icon in a moving image format and an icon in a still image format, and

the menu controller highlights the content icon in the moving image format as a focus of attention and does not highlight the content icon in the still image format.

6. (Original) The multimedia player according to claim 1, wherein the reader reads, from the external storage medium installed in the multimedia player, control information indicating whether the content stored in the external storage medium is access-restricted,

the storage further stores user-configured restriction configuration data designating whether to activate access restriction, and

if the control information specifies that the content stored in the external storage medium corresponding to the medium icon in focus be access-restricted, and if the restriction configuration data specifies activation of access restriction, the menu controller displays an associated menu item image on the condition that information necessary to lift access restriction is entered by the user.

7. (Previously Presented) A method of displaying an on-screen menu by an apparatus capable of playing back digital contents, comprising:

reading a content from an external storage medium installed in the apparatus to serve as an area for storing data for the content played back in the apparatus;

reading, from a predetermined storage, data for a plurality of medium icons representing respective types of external storage mediums that can be installed in the apparatus; and

displaying an on-screen menu related to playback of the content and playing back the content read;

generating image data for the on-screen menu which includes the plurality of medium icons, wherein

the reading a content reads, from the external storage medium installed in the apparatus, a menu item image visually representing a summary of the content stored in the external storage medium and including an image generated according to a rule where the size does not overlaps the array of icons included in the on-screen menu or the size matches the size of the entirety on-screen menu, and

the generating visually highlights the medium icon which the user selected as a focus of attention, and displays the menu item image read from the external storage medium corresponding to the highlighted medium icon, in the on-screen menu.

8. (Previously Presented) The method of displaying an on-screen menu according to claim 7, wherein the reading a content reads, from a predetermined area in the external storage medium installed in the apparatus, the image with the size not overlapping the array of icons included in

the on-screen menu or with the size matching the size of the entirety on-screen menu, as the menu item image, and

the generating generates the image data for the on-screen menu by visually blending the menu item image with an array of medium icons.

9. (Previously Presented) The method of displaying on-screen menu according to claim 7, wherein the reading from the predetermined storage further reads data for a plurality of function icons representing respective types of playback functions for playing back respective types of contents,

the generating generates the image data for the on-screen menu in which the plurality of function icons and the plurality of medium icons are arranged in a two-dimension array,

the image generated according to the rule and read in the reading a content comprises a foreground image of a size that does not interfere with the array of function icons, and a background image on which is superimposed the array of functional icons, and

the generating further generates the image data for the on-screen menu by visually blending at least one of the foreground image and the background image with the array of function icons.

10. (Previously Presented) The method of displaying an on-screen menu according to claim 7, wherein the reading a content reads, from the external storage medium installed in the apparatus, a content icon representing a content stored in the external storage medium, and

the generating places the content icon thus read at a position of the medium icon or in the adjoining area thereof.

11. (Original) The method of displaying an on-screen menu according to claim 10, wherein the content icon read from the external storage medium installed in the apparatus comprises an icon in a moving image format and an icon in a still image format, and

the generating highlights the content icon in the moving image format as a focus of attention and does not highlight the content icon in the still image format.

12. (Previously Presented) The method of displaying an on-screen menu according to claim 7, wherein the reading a content reads, from the external storage medium installed in the apparatus, control information indicating whether the content stored in the external storage medium is access-restricted,

the reading from a predetermined storage further reads user-configured restriction configuration data designating whether to activate access restriction, and

if the control information specifies that the content stored in the external storage medium corresponding to the medium icon in focus be access-restricted, and if the restriction configuration data specifies activation of access restriction, the generating displays an associated menu item image on the condition that information necessary to lift access restriction is entered by the user.

13. (Currently Amended) A computer readable recording medium which stores a computer program product for displaying an on-screen menu by an apparatus capable of playing back digital contents, comprising:

an acquiring module which acquires an instruction related to playback of a content via a user's instruction;

a reading module which reads the content from an external storage medium installed in the apparatus to serve as an area for storing data for the content played back in the apparatus;

a storing module which stores data for a plurality of medium icons representing respective types of external storage mediums that can be installed in the apparatus; and

a processing module which displays an on-screen menu related to playback of the content and plays back the content read;

a generating module which generates image data for the on-screen menu which includes the plurality of medium icons, wherein

the reading module reads, from the external storage medium installed in the apparatus, a menu item image visually representing a summary of the content stored in the external storage medium and including an image generated according to a rule where the size does not overlaps the array of icons included in the on-screen menu or the size matches the size of the entirety on-screen menu, and

the generating module visually highlights the medium icon which the user selected as a focus of attention, and displays the menu item image read from the external storage medium corresponding to the highlighted medium icon, in the on-screen menu.

14. (Currently Amended) The computer ~~program product~~ readable recording medium according to claim 13, wherein the reading module reads, from a predetermined area in the external storage medium installed in the apparatus, the image with the size not overlapping the array of icons

included in the on-screen menu or with the size matching the size of the entirety on-screen menu as the menu item image, and

the generating module generates the image data for the on-screen menu by visually blending the menu item image with an array of medium icons.

15. (Currently Amended) The computer ~~program product~~ readable recording medium according to claim 13, wherein the storing module further stores data for a plurality of function icons representing respective types of playback functions for playing back respective types of contents,

the generating module generates the image data for the on-screen menu in which the plurality of function icons and the plurality of medium icons are arranged in a two-dimension array,

the image generated according to the rule read by the reading module comprises a foreground image of a size that does not interfere with the array of function icons, and a background image on which is superimposed the array of functional icons, and

the generating module further generates the image data for the on-screen menu by visually blending at least one of the foreground image and the background image with the array of function icons.

16. (Currently Amended) The computer ~~program product~~ readable recording medium according to claim 13, wherein the reading module reads, from the external storage medium installed in the apparatus, a content icon representing a content stored in the external storage medium, and

the generating module places the content icon thus read at a position of the medium icon or in the adjoining area thereof.

17. (Currently Amended) The computer ~~program product~~ readable recording medium according to claim 16, wherein the content icon read from the external storage medium installed in the apparatus comprises an icon in a moving image format and an icon in a still image format, and

the generating module highlights the content icon in the moving image format as a focus of attention and does not highlight the content icon in the still image format.

18. (Currently Amended) The computer ~~program product~~ readable recording medium according to claim 13, wherein the reading module reads, from the external storage medium installed in the apparatus, control information indicating whether the content stored in the external storage medium is access-restricted,

the storing module further stores user-configured restriction configuration data designating whether to activate access restriction, and

if the control information specifies that the content stored in the external storage medium corresponding to the medium icon in focus be access-restricted, and if the restriction configuration data specifies activation of access restriction, the generating module displays an associated menu item image on the condition that information necessary to lift access restriction is entered by the user.

19. (Cancelled)

20. (Previously Presented) The multimedia player according to claim 1, wherein the reader reads, from the external storage medium installed in the multimedia player, a content icon representing a content stored in the external storage medium, and

the menu controller, after displaying the medium icon, replaces the medium icon with the content icon thus read.

21. (Previously Presented) The multimedia player according to claim 20, wherein the menu controller replaces the medium icon with the content icon by displaying the content icon such that it slides into the area in the medium icon while the medium icon is being displayed, and halting the content icon in the area where the medium icon has been displayed.